

Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting

February 24, 2014 . 9:00 to 3:00 . Lacey Community Center

M i n u t e s

ELAC MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Bianca Bailey – Parent & Parent Advisory Group Member, Department of Early Learning
Bob Butts – Assistant Superintendent for Early Learning, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
RaShelle Davis – Early Learning Policy Advisory, Governor’s Executive Policy Office
Kathy Goebel – Policy Associate, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges
Rebecca Timmen – Project LAUNCH State/Early Childhood Coordination Systems Coordinator, DOH
Dee Hirsch – Program and Admissions Director, Discovery Montessori School
Dr. Bette Hyde – Director, Department of Early Learning
Jennifer Jennings-Shaffer – Project Manager, HSSCO, Department of Early Learning
Lois Martin – Director, Community Day Center for Children, Inc.
Nelly Mbajah – Early Childhood Development Program Manager, Department of Social & Health Services
Casey Osborn-Hinman *on behalf of* Leslie Dozono – Early Learning Policy Director, Children’s Alliance
Jennifer Ross – Parent
Gene Sharratt – Executive Director, Washington Student Achievement Council
Karen Walker – ESIT Program Administrator, Department of Early Learning
Sam Whiting – President & Chief Executive Officer, Thrive by Five Washington

ELAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Luba Bezborodnikova – Associate Superintendent for Early Learning, Puget Sound ESD
Senator Annette Cleveland – Washington State Senate
Representative Jessyn Farrell – Washington State House of Representatives
Representative Larry Haler – Washington State House of Representatives
Cynthia Juarez – Early Learning Director, ESD 105
Jeromy Sullivan – Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe Chairman
Lisa Webb – Family Child Care Provider
VACANT – Washington State Senate

REGIONAL ADVISORS (RA) IN ATTENDANCE

Susan Barbeau – First 5 FUNdamentals of Pierce County
Samantha Bowen – Southeast
Enrica Hampton – SOAR, King County
Rhodes Lockwood – Olympic-Kitsap Peninsulas
Wilanne Ollila-Perry – Northwest
Nancy Spurgeon – North Central
Sandra Szambelan – Inland Northwest Early Learning Alliance, Northeast
Dan Teuteberg – Visions for Early Learning, West Central
Jodi Wall – Southwest Washington Early Learning (SWEL)

REGIONAL ADVISORS ABSENT

Karri Livingston – Investing in Children: Coalition Central

Opening Remarks from the Department of Early Learning (DEL) Director

Bette Hyde introduced two new ELAC members, Rebecca Timmen representing the Department of Health (DOH) and Sam Whiting, President and CEO of Thrive by Five Washington. Bette shared that she presented to the League of Education Voters as well as the Tribal Leaders Congress recently. DEL's Strengthening Families Washington (SFW) program is partnering with Seattle's Child magazine to honor one primary caregiver each day of February. We've posted these "Unsung Heroes" each day on SFW's [Facebook](#) page and are honoring them at a reception tonight.

DEL Legislative Update

- Amy Blondin, DEL Government and Community Relations Manager, provided a [2014 Bills of Interest](#) handout, which includes short summaries of legislation DEL is tracking during the 2014 session.
- Heather Moss, DEL Deputy Director, summarized the Early Start Bill, House Bill (HB) 2377, Senate Bill (SB) 6127 (companion bill).

Discussion: A member asked how Family Friend and Neighbor (FFN) care would be impacted in the Early Start bill. Heather explained that FFN providers would be required to become licensed after 36 months or after simultaneously or consecutively caring for more than 6 consecutive unrelated children. FFN providers who are relatives of the child are exempt. Heather shared that DEL is currently working on a write up on the changes to licensing standards and the fiscal note. The Early Achievers part alone starts out at \$20 million this first year, and then ramps up to \$50-60 million in the following years. Washington still has Race to the Top (RTT) dollars over the next 2 years to cover some of the expenditures. Bette added that Representative Hunter is working with DEL to figure out how to fund efforts once RTT funding ends.

Council Q&A on the State & Partner Agency Updates

- State and Partner Agencies took comments and questions on updates submitted to ELAC members prior to the meeting.
 - [ELAC State & Partner Agency Updates](#)

Discussion: Casey Osborn-Hinman asked when MERIT data might be available to the public. Juliet Morrison explained that DEL's contractor, 3SI has found that the data needs a lot of cleaning. She will have more information on the timeline by April, and they are hoping to have the data published this summer. Lois Martin asked how many providers that have joined Early Achievers (EA) are serving marginalized populations and families receiving subsidies. Early Achievers looks at marginalized populations geographically, and according to their data, more providers are participating in EA where there is high need than where providers may not need that additional support. Juliet will follow up with more information. There was a question about the availability of data on the effectiveness of FDK. Bob mentioned that Randy Dorn recently wrote an [editorial](#) about the importance of investing in FDK for school readiness.

ELAC Work Plan Development

- Evette Jasper, DEL State/Local Coordination Program Manager, and Bea Kelleigh, Dovetailing, presented the process of the newly formed Work Plan Committee and facilitated a discussion on the draft ELAC Work Plan topics. They thanked those who volunteered to be a part of this committee: Kathy Goebel, Lisa Webb, Lois Martin, Rebecca Timmen, Nelly Mbajah, and Nancy Spurgeon.
 - [Work Plan Process, Templates & Timeline](#)
 - [Work Plan Topics](#)

- [Work Plan Topic Alignment](#)
- [ELAC Guiding Documents – Work Plan Development Process](#) (Guiding Documents, Attachment E)
- [ELAC Input on Work Plan](#) (from 2/24/14 ELAC meeting)

Discussion: We are in a learning year right now, so we will finalize the 2014 Work Plan in April. The proposed topics are informed by the Early Learning Regional Coalition priorities and on the Washington Early Learning Partnership (WELP) priority strategies of the Early Learning Plan (ELP). ELAC's Executive Committee is charged with developing the Work Plan and recommends a 2-step process.

1. Consider and confirm the major topics to address this year.
2. Develop a final Work Plan for joint DEL and ELAC adoption.

Wilanne Ollila-Perry pointed out that RAs should plan on connecting with their coalitions to make sure they're ready to provide input according to the proposed timeline.

ELAC unanimously agreed to use the proposed ELAC Work Plan Development Process and confirmed the 2014 Work Plan topics: Early Achievers, ECEAP/PreK Expansion, Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS) Rollout, parent leadership & engagement/public awareness, Advancing Racial Equity, Supporting Infants/Toddlers.

Race To The Top Report

- Juliet Morrison, DEL Assistant Director of Quality Practice and Professional Development, provided a [presentation](#) on the progress over the last year of implementation of the Race-to-the-Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant.

Discussion: There was discussion about access to and usage of scholarships and grants. The first year not as many people took advantage, but that has grown with some adjustments around eligibility to use the funds. Going forward we want to look at whether we are retaining those students. Nancy Spurgeon added that part of the lower usage had to do with timing of the application period. Rhodes Lockwood asked about how rankings are determined in the career lattice. He ranks at the lowest level of directors with a Masters degree in Social Work, while some of the students he teaches rank higher because of their degree type. He encouraged some thoughtful looks considering in-service professional development and employment. Juliet shared that DEL would like to honor all of those individuals in different career paths. They are also getting rid of the word "related" to reduce confusion.

LUNCH and a Child Abuse Prevention Month Presentation

- Judy King, SFWA Administrator, DEL, provided a [presentation](#).
 - [Strengthening Families Framework](#)
 - [Parent Recognition Month Proclamation](#)
- Bette Hyde [recognized Kelli Bohanon](#), Assistant Director of Partnerships & Collaboration at DEL as she transitions into her new role as Deputy Director of Child Care Aware of Washington.

Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) Expansion

- Juliet Morrison [presented](#) the plans for the upcoming release for application 1,350 preschool expansion slots.

Discussion:

A member asked how the 2 ½ hour day work option will work if ECEAP is moving to a 6 hour day and whether there is dedicated nap/rest time in the middle of the day. Juliet shared that DEL is

sticking with the ECEAP requirements and considering a different service model. There was discussion about the difference between blended versus braided. Each requires different tracking systems at the local level. With ECEAP expansion, DEL is looking at braided funding. A member shared that communities have different needs. If people don't necessarily need 6 hours, will there be options for some more expansion slots without mandating the 6 hours? Juliet confirmed that the 6 hour days are not being mandated at this time. DEL wants to offer the expansion slots for this amount of time to learn more prior to trying to mandate it. Nancy Spurgeon emphasized that although WCCC pays less in rural and remote communities, the cost of implementation is not less because of transportation costs. There was discussion about space and facility issues with the ambitious increase in slots, and whether providers can have access to funds for expansion and capital improvement costs. Juliet said those costs have not been built in. DEL is looking at the idea of encouraging shared service alliances among providers, and is interested in how that might work in local communities. What do we need to consider as we start to think about this as a strategy? She asked that members and RA's have conversations with their communities about this idea to share with DEL.

Regional Advisor Discussion

- Enrica Hampton, Regional Advisor to SOAR, King County began the discussion by providing vignettes of different experiences of infants, toddlers and their families in formal care settings.
 - [Discussion Questions](#)
 - [CLASP-Zero to Three Policy Recommendations for Infant/Toddler Care](#)
 - [2013 Child Care Improvements for the Future Task Force Report](#)
 - [Early Start Bill Analysis](#)

Discussion: Rhodes shared that the Child Care Licensing WAC that transitions children out of infant or toddler classrooms has not been developmentally appropriate for all children. Dee Hirsch added that there are similar barriers for mixed-age groups in preschool. Heather Moss shared that DEL is currently addressing the mixed-age issues by broadening the Kindergarten term in order to adapt for Montessori programs. Sandra Szambelan asked what will change when the Infant/Toddler (I/T) child care consultations integrate with Early Achievers by July 2014. Samantha Bowen wanted to know what the implications would be for the contracts the ten Infant/Toddler regions currently have with DEL to carry out the systems and consultation efforts. Wilanne expressed concern about losing all the progress I/T regions have worked so hard on with their many partnerships. Juliet appreciated all the thoughtful questions and comments. She shared that she knows that in many regions, the I/T consultations have already worked with EA, and it seems to be a natural fit. DEL wants to keep what has been working well, and emphasize that EA is also a Birth to 5 initiative. There are also potential opportunities to link the work with the Frontiers of Innovation efforts. Enrica asked if there is early intervention expertise on the task force charged with making recommendations on the integration, and Rebecca Timmen asked if there is health representation. Juliet confirmed that if there is not, DEL would include representatives. Lynne Shanafelt, Child Care Administrator at DEL explained that the Child Care Center licensing rules have not been revised for about 10 years. She recognized that the mixed-age group concerns have been raised many times, and shared that there are some Early Head Start partnerships emerging. Rhodes asked when DEL will have a chance to revisit the center rules. Lynne said DEL is drafting revisions to align licensing with Early Achievers and ECEAP standards. That draft may be available this summer. Dee asked whether the online survey conducted about 4 years ago can be used for the alignment work. Lynne said she will make sure that DEL's rules coordinator has access to the survey data. Bette asked the RA's what they thought about the fact that most children are in FFN care. Wilanne

shared that the Northwest region is looking at playgroups to learn more, and Nancy said Wenatchee's Play and Learn groups are overflowing with FFN providers.

Reflection/Follow Up

- MERIT Data timeline will be shared at the next meeting. DEL will follow up with the number of providers participating in Early Achievers who serve families that utilize child care subsidies.
- The ELAC Work Plan committee will be meeting in the next couple of weeks to develop the draft 2014 Work Plan.
- DEL will send a follow-up e-mail with the questions regarding shared service alliances.

Closing Remarks & Adjourn

- The next regular meeting is scheduled for **April 14th, 2014** from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m., at the Lacey Community Center.